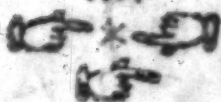




# The co-

pie of a letter sente  
to one master Thyspyn  
chanon of Exeter for  
that he denied y<sup>e</sup> scrip-  
ture to be the touche  
stone or trial of al o-  
ther doctrines wher-  
unto is added an  
appologe and a  
bulworke, in  
defence of the  
same let-  
ter.



1833

1833

1833

1833

1833



h  
o  
w  
u  
c  
c  
f  
a  
m  
a  
l  
a  
w  
i  
n  
m  
n  
b  
e  
o



**C** To the right worſhip  
full and his ſingular good Ma-  
ſter ſy: Peter Carewe: Philip  
Nicolles wytheth the conti-  
nuall fauoure of  
God.

**G**reate cōforte is it to Chriſ-  
tes poze floceke (right wor-  
ſhipful ſy:) among ſo manie  
hudge Rockes and wyldē ſeas, as  
oure weſte partes are compaſſed  
with all: to hauē ſome pozte oꝝ ha-  
uē wher Chriſtes ſhippes moughe  
caſt ancre, and foꝝ a ſpace haue ſuc-  
coure, tyl þ ſtoꝛmes be paſte. This  
fatherlie prouiſſon maketh the al-  
myghtie and moſt mercifull Lorde  
al waies to helpe the that be hys.  
And though Jonas ſincke yet is þ  
whale redie to kepe him fro perishi-  
ng & to brynge hym to land, as a-  
monge ſo manye greate ſtoꝛmes,  
no meruaile thoughte ſome haue  
ben plugged vnder the water but  
of ſuche, gloriouſe ſhall the reſur-

rection be. But in my contrey (my  
right deare sir) where most dayn-  
ger appeareth to be: scantly hath  
ther any wette their feete, praysed  
may the name of God be therfore, &  
so prouideth for yong suckelinges  
whiche else shoulde be ouer whel-  
med before they were weaned fro  
their milke. Your pure and yer-  
nest zeale toward gods truth and  
paynfull laboures infendeynge  
innocentes is not vnkowne to  
a great menye. But would to God  
it were farther knowne, euen tho  
rowe out. Not that you shoulde  
haue the prayles of men for your  
laboure, for they belonge to God  
and it is wickednesse to seke them  
from hym, but that it myght pro-  
uoke other me of worship, and ho-  
nour also in all places, to so seruēt  
and godlye desire of Christes doc-  
trine, to be published among vs,  
Namely the whole bible, the scrip-  
tures of God, the newe and olde

te=



testament. Which onely doctrine  
is a lone sufficient to teache vs the  
true worship of God, sayeth in his  
promises, and in all good workes,  
to walke the waye to euerlastinge  
lyfe. To the defence of thys hea-  
uenly doctrine (I saye) woulde I  
prouoke all me of honour and wor-  
shippe, by your ensample, if wit and  
learneing faile not. Your gentle-  
nesse and liberalitie, towarde me  
and al those that longe for that  
heauenly doctrine: I passe ouer in  
silence, to cut awaye occasions fro  
well tonges, althoughe the exam-  
ple be greatly to be desired, in all  
men of worshippe, yea in all them  
that professe Christe accordinge to  
theyr power.

All these thinges nowe conside-  
red, besyde the manyfolde labours  
and daylye trauaile that you take  
diuers waies to haue the veritye  
knowne, to banyshe lyinge and  
cloked holinesse, to haue the Lorde

A.iii. tru-

truly worshiped, and to rote out  
Idolatrye. Consideringe also your  
vernest desire to thys my smal la-  
boure in wyting to maister Chris-  
pyne a simple letter, for asmuch as  
I perceyued that you were deter-  
minately mynded to put it in print  
I thought I coulde not bestowe  
my laboure better, then to set it  
furthe in your name chiefly to  
purg me from that euil suspicion  
that is lyke to ensue the printinge  
of it. For seinge they begin to byte  
me pryncipally all redye, for exhibi-  
tyng certayne Articles preached  
of oure learned men, and woulde  
perswade men that I dyd it of a  
preteced malice, sekeinge their de-  
struction: I knowe well they shall  
saye much rather, that it was my  
suite to haue this my letter spread  
a broad, and that I dyd it to seeke  
praysse, as they alwayes seeke most  
praise to them selfe, & least deserue  
it, or that I stād in mine owne co-  
cepte



celte as to thinke & I haue done a  
great acte, wheras I acknowe-  
ledge it in deede to be but counter-  
falte, in cōparisson of a great nūbre  
that be wel leraned. Which if they  
had the matter in handlyng: these  
men myght haue been a shamed  
to shew their faces in a pulpit, to  
declare any suche matter agayne  
Nowe to preuente these biteinge  
serpentes of thys poison the lord  
knoweth whether it be my faute  
or no to haue it prynted, and you  
partly can testifie. Notwithstand-  
yng: it shal not greue me to haue  
it prynted, but rathere I shal be  
glad of it thoughe it were but for  
thys cause onelie. To declare vnto  
all other contréis, that deuensher  
lacketh not some well wylers (at  
the leaste) as well amonge the poore  
creatures, as the riche and wor-  
shipfull, & desier the glorie of God  
and furdraunce of hys word. Als  
touchinge the articles offered to  
the

the visitours, which they say to be  
done of malice, hatered, and manie  
other goodmorrowes, let suche me  
knowe that I hate theyr doctrine  
in dede. As for any malice that I  
owe to the men: I are no more  
grace and fauour of the Lorde, to  
be geuen to my selfe, then I wysh  
to the vilest of them all, if it might  
so come to passe and please God.

For I knowe there can no suche  
rancor and malice dwell in any  
christen herte, as they iudge other  
men by them selues.

And thys I saye more ouer,  
that I am assured of these mini-  
sters and of the kynges counsaile  
also: that they be no suche bloude  
thurstye tirantes, as haue pleasur  
in shedyng of bloude. For if they  
were but as cruell in punishinge  
the blynde wycked and sedici-  
ouse. I nought saye, preachers, as  
the popes ministers haue beene  
in tormentyng innocentes: I take  
God



God to mythesse, I woulde netter  
haue declared so muche as I haue  
vnto them, though I should haue  
smarted for it. This much haue I  
sayde, to declare vnto all honeste  
bertes myne innocencie in suche  
thynges as they begin to laye to  
my charge: and to stope the mou-  
thes of them, that can do naught  
elles but flāder, flatter, and dissē-  
ble, euen with theyr frindes, that  
they mought holde theyr tongues  
lest if they passe theyr boundes. I  
opē them to theyr shame let them  
take thys for a warning. Feithere  
let them thynke this spoken of ma-  
lice, for I spake it for theyr hone-  
stie and quietnesse, as wel as mine  
owne commoditie.

Now, to conclude in fewe wordes  
I haue added to thys my letter, a  
little appologie or defence, the bet-  
ter to mythstande theyr cruel and  
subtyle deceite. And because, they  
lye alwaye lurkynge in bulwo-  
kes

kes and wyll not come furth into  
the open fielde, I haue in the ende  
made a little bulworke, out of the  
whych I haue shotte a fewe of  
theyr owne pellettes. Not that I  
thinke them necessarie to confound  
them wyth all: but euen to shame  
them whē they shal se them selues  
stricken with theyr owne weapons.

**[Esa. lxxv.]** Beholde, nowe appeare those  
meruailouse thynges that Esaye  
speaketh of so earnestlie, in so much  
that he repeteth it agayne. Yea e-  
uen meruailouse thynges and a  
wonder, sayth he, and what is it?  
It foloweth. For the wysdome of  
the wyse shal perishe, & the vnder-  
standings of the wyttie, shal hide  
it selfe. But wherefore happeneth  
this? Loke you a little before and  
you shal easelye perceiue the cause.  
No man can open it more playne,  
then the prophet doeth hym selfe.  
Read the place.

After this will I poure out my  
spi-



Whitherso(ever) I shall prophete vpon all fleſhe,  
and your ſonnes and daughters  
ſhall prophete your olde men ſhall  
dreame dreames, and your yonge  
men ſhall ſee viſions. Yea in thoſe  
dayes I wil poure out my ſpिरite  
vpon maidens and ſeruautes. Act.

Joel. ii.

Nowe therefore, ſeynge that  
Peter affirmeth after the Pro-  
phete Eiaſay, that al fleſhe is graſſe,  
and al þe gloꝛe of mā is as þe floure  
of graſſe, the graſſe withereth and  
the flower falleth a waie, but the  
worde of oure God abydeth foꝛ e-  
uer: I woulde exhorte in you  
(ryght worſhippefull) all men  
frōme the hygheſte to the loweſte,  
to cleaue faſte to the word of god,  
foꝛ it wyl come to paſſe, that who  
ſo euer calleth vpon the name of  
the Lorde ſhall be ſaued. Who e-  
uer defende you Amen

1. Pet. i.

Eſaie. xl.

Your humble and fayethful at  
your commaundement  
Phillip Nicolles.

**H**ere foloweth the copie of a let-  
ter writtyn to maister Chylspyn chawncel-  
lor of Cresset concernynge thre questions put  
furth in hys sermon, wherby he intended  
to declare all them heretiches, that  
would Gods word to be the  
touch stone:

**I**t chaunced me, wor-  
shipful maister Chyl-  
spyn, to be at your ser-  
mon preached at Warle-  
don, the xxiii. Daye  
of marche laste paste, at the mone-  
thes mynde of maister Dtes Gyl-  
berd. In whiche sermon, amonge  
other thynge, I remembre you  
enuiet Luther verie sore, onelye  
because he woulde haue the scrip-  
ture to be the touch stone, or triall  
of al other doctrines. And calling  
Luther, as it were, into disputaci-  
ons wyth al hys disciples, you put  
furth thre questions whiche be  
these.

Fyrst, if ther rose any heresies or  
dissentions befoze the Gospel was  
writ-



written (as ther dyd in dede, bet-  
wene Simō Magus and Simō  
Peter, and ouer the circumficion)  
aske Luther & hys disciples, whoe  
nowe shall discusse the matter,  
and whoe shoulde be the touche  
stone to trie the mattier. The Gos-  
pell, can not, for it was not then  
wrytten.

The second questian is. If one  
shoulde denye Mathewes Gospel  
or say Mathewe wrote it not: how  
can it be proued by scripture? It  
can not you say, for scripture spea-  
keth not of it,

The thyrde questia dyd deceiue  
the ignorant people, which haue  
litle or no knowledge, which is. If  
ther be dissension or strife aboute  
the vnderstandeynge of the scrip-  
tures, and both alledge scripture,  
as the Arians dyd, whoe brought  
to places of scripture for þe defence  
of theire errour, in suche case you  
aske whoe shalbe iudge: or by whō  
shall

shall this be determined. Or rather  
to ble your veri wordes: wher  
is Luthers touch stone? The scrip-  
ture can not be touche stone you  
saye, for boeth bringe forth scrip-  
ture. Wherefore ther must nedes  
be an other touch stone. Where is  
Luthers now? quoth you.. What  
answer can be made to these questi-  
ons? For Luthers touch stone wyll  
not serue. Your answer was ther-  
fore, that Luther must gyue place  
and saye wyth you, that it is the  
holye gost that must be touchstone.

Thus you triumphed vpon  
Luther and hys disciples, meane-  
inge by Luthers disciples, suche,  
(I suppose) as holde thys, opinion  
as though you had ouer come the  
that they coulde answere nothing

Thys is easie to do, when a mā  
hath all the talke hym selfe. But  
for as muche as you wyshed Lu-  
ther there at your sermon or some  
of his disciples, to answere to your

que=



questioners: I thynke verelye you  
wylbe contented to heare a poore  
man answere, though yet but sim-  
plye. But I do you to wyt, that I  
am none of Luthers disciples, for  
I knowe not Luther. But that I  
thynke hym to be a man as you be  
and therefore of hym selfe a lyer.  
But if Luther spake the truth, I  
woulde beleue him as sone as you  
or any other that speake the truth  
for the trueth, by the whiche I  
meane gods worde, can not be spo-  
ken wyth out holye gooste, if it be  
spoke to the glorie of God. But in  
dede, you or any other maye wyc-  
kedlye alledge the scripture of  
your selfe wythout the spirite, to  
the defaceinge of the glorie of god  
and hinderance of hys worde, as  
the deuyl dyd to Christe Mathe.  
liii. But I wyl resorte to the que-  
stions, wyth thys protestacion,  
that if I haue by any meanes  
mylke reported your wordes, or  
other

other wyle vnderstanded them,  
then you ment: I hertelye desire  
you that you wyl charitably in-  
fourme me what were your que-  
stions, what ye ment in them, and  
howe you lyke thys my rude ans-  
were. In so doinge. I wyl be con-  
firmable to your counsayle, or else  
I wyl shewe you my mynde why  
I ought not.

Nowe to your fyrste questian,  
whyche is thys. If ther arose any  
dissention of heresie before the gos-  
pell was wryten, as it happened in  
dede betwene Symō Magus and  
Simon Peter. Also ouer the cir-  
cumcision, where had ben then the  
touche stone?

To this questia. by your leaue  
mayster Chryppne, I wyl in this  
maner answer, wyth Luther, and  
say the scripture must be the touch  
stone. If you saye it was not wryt-  
ten: I answer. The worde was in  
the begynninge. You wyl saye that  
Chryste



Christe came accordynge to the  
scripture, to finish e a newe testa-  
ment, whiche he cōfirmed and sea-  
led wyth his bloude and when the  
newe was come, the olde banished  
awaye as Saynte Paule affir-  
meth to the Hebryes. And you  
wyl saye peraduenture, that Lu-  
ther also meaneth the newe testa-  
mente, whiche was not wrytten;  
when the questian of circumcision  
was moued, wherefore it coulde  
not be the touche stone. To make  
many wordes about this questian  
in my cōcept, wer but losse of time.  
But I aske you, Maister Chyl-  
pine, what difference is betwene  
scripture wrytten and scripture  
spoken, if boeth be scripture? You  
wyl graunte I am sure, that Pe-  
ter, Paul and James wordes wer  
scripture, when they preached or  
taughte the Gospell.

Then if anie man had asked for  
scripture it mought haue ben an-

B.i.

swered

swerd. Go to Peter, Paul, & John  
wyth thother Apostles. For they  
preaching and cosilayle was scrip-  
ture. So lacked not at that tyme  
Luthers tuchestone, for the Apo-  
stles wyttinges and preachinges  
agreed, and all was scripture.  
Wherefore thys question is suffi-  
cientlye answered to the worthy-  
nesse of it

To your second question which  
is. If any man should denye Ma-  
thwes Gospel, you aske howe it  
could be proued by scripture, that  
Mathew wrote it. To this I an-  
swere, that if it be agreinge to the  
other scriptures, and dissent in no-  
thinge from it: what daynger is it  
to call it Mathewes Gospel, who  
so euer wrote it: And though ye  
could denye Mathewes Gospel  
to be Scripture: yet there is  
Scripture. For Marke, Luke  
and Johns Gospel, Peter, Paule  
and Johns Epistles, be scripture  
But



But I doubt not you wyll graue  
Mathewes Gospel to be scripture.  
But you wil aske me how I know  
it. I answer, by the reporte of the  
elders, holye fathers, mother ho-  
lye church. Howe saye you now?  
Haue I answered you wel? Doth  
not thys answer please you? I  
thynke yes. But if I shoulde are  
the turkes howe they knowe that  
Mahomet was an holye prophet  
whoe deuised and caused to be de-  
uised, the Alcaron, what answer  
suppose you they coulde make? I  
thynke none other but as I haue  
made you before. That is we  
knowe it by oure eiders or holye  
prophetes and fathers before vs.  
Nowe I wyll aske you a questian  
whiche shall not be impossible, nor  
verie vnlyke. If it pleased God to  
moue the herte of a Jewe whiche  
wer neither churistian nor turke, to  
seke in the worlde here, the mooste  
perfecte religion. He goeth to the

Turkes and cometh to the christi-  
ans. Wherwyt h woulde you per-  
swad hym to thys perfect religion.  
Woulde you preache to hym con-  
stitutions, counselles and customes  
of the elders: He mought then as  
well beleue the turkes as you. For  
they haue many thynges in their  
lawe, that seme to be verie godlye.  
And theyre authoritie, wythout  
authoritie of scripture, is even as  
good as yours. But I knowe you  
wyl saye, what so euer you thinke,  
that you woulde preache the Gos-  
pell vnto hym. Then must you ne-  
des graunte, that the scripture is  
of greater efficacie and strength,  
then oure fathers elleders and  
counsayles. If you wyl yet wyth  
your questians affirme, that the  
fathers whych descended frome  
tyme to tyme frome the Apostles  
hither to: haue greater authoritie  
then the scripture: I wyl aske you  
an other questian.

The



The Apostles of Christ, forsoke  
the ceremonies, customes and con-  
stitutions of theyr elders, forfa-  
thers, and of as holpe mother ho-  
lye church in the iudgemente of  
the worlde at that tyme, as yours  
is in the world at thys houre, and  
of as longe continuance of tyme.  
Yet folowed they Christes doc-  
trine, who was named of those ho-  
lye fathers, a sediciouse felowe, a  
newe tidinges bringer and an he-  
retike. Answer me now, what  
touchstone had they to trye Chri-  
stes doctrine wyth that they so er-  
nestlye folowed hym, and refused  
theyr forfathers, olde holpe doc-  
tors, procedynge from Moyses  
to Christ. Ther were at that tyme  
auncient fathers which had great  
learneing, both byshopes and prie-  
stes. The tradions, ordinaunces  
and ceremonies whiche they vsed,  
receyued they of theyr elders, lyke  
as you woulde haue vs to receiue

the constitucions of oure elders.  
Tell me now, how can you excuse  
the Apostles? They were but poore  
fisher men and net makers, they  
wer not brought vp in the scholes,  
they hadde not the leisure to turne  
and tolle those greate volumes to  
be made doctours of deuinitie nor  
law.

And yet within a whyle, they  
take vpon them to teach the great  
doctours, and what mought those  
holpe fathers haue sayed to these  
fishers? Take hede to your fysh-  
ynge. What haue you to do wyth  
the scripture? It is not mete for e-  
uerie coblarde to be talkeynge of  
scripture. Howe were these men so  
lyghtlye perswaded?

What touchestone I saye had  
they? But seyng you woulde so  
fayne haue the name of the holpe  
fathers and holpe church, I aske  
you thys questian.

Those Apostles and Disciples  
of



of Christe whych were in hys  
tyme wyth hym presente, whych  
preached and wrote the scripture:  
were holy fathers and of the per-  
fecte true church.

If the fathers syeth they: tyme  
haue dissented frome them in doc-  
tryne, maners, custome, lawes,  
or in anye thyng partayneinge  
to Christes relygion: whych fa-  
thers woulde you folowe? If you  
denye that the fathers haue des-  
sented, as is a fore sayed, I refer  
the proue of it tyll a tyme of more  
leasure. Partely because I thynke  
you wyl not denye it, but chie-  
fely because my letter woulde be  
to longe.

Wherefore I wyl come to your  
thynde question, whych in dede in-  
cludeth the matter of all the reste  
whiche is thys.

If ther arysse anye contention  
in vnderstandeynge the Scrip-  
tures wherein, boeth the parties  
B.iii. bying

bring scripture for them: whos  
shall nowe discusse the matter?  
Where is nowe the touchstone?  
The scriptures can not. For boeth  
bring scripture. And the scripture  
you meane causeth þ cōtrouersye.  
But I aske you whether the scrip-  
tures be deuided or no? If they be  
deuided: then accordinge to Chris-  
tes worde, they muste be confoun-  
ded. But that is an incōuenience  
and I knowe well you wyll not  
graunt that If the scriptures be  
not deuided, but agre in one, as  
they do in deede, for one place can-  
not be repugnaunte to an other,  
thoughe it so seme: then haue not  
boeth parties scripture for them,  
but þ one partie must nedes false-  
ly alledge scripture.

But you will aske me who shal  
geue sentence, or by whom the cō-  
trouersye shalbe appeased, and  
where is Luthers touchstone? In  
deede at your sermō, no man made  
an-



answer. Wherefore you made an-  
swere and sayde, the holye gooste  
must be tuchstone. As who should  
saye, Luthers answer were not  
the very same. When he sayeth  
gods worde must be the touchston  
as you reporte of hym. And I  
praye you maister Christpyn, what  
difference is betweene gods worde  
and godes spirite? Is not goddes  
worde the breath of gods mouth?  
And call you not that the holye  
gooste? Howe be it, it is easilye per-  
ceyued what ye meane. Ye put in  
the holye gost for a cloke to deceiue  
vs wyth albeit ye meane nothing  
lesse then the holye gooste If you  
aske me how I proue it: I answer  
thus I proue it. Wythout sayeth  
it is not possible to please God, but  
sayeth cometh by the word of god.  
Ergo, wythout the worde of God  
nothyng can please God. But you  
excluide the word of God from the  
spirite of God, and in stead of that  
toyne

foyne vnto it, fathers, counsa-  
les, and oure mother holy church  
for you saye the worde of God can  
not be touchston. but onelie beare  
wytnesse, but the holye gooste is  
the touch stone, whoe was and is  
in the holye fathers, that haue al-  
wayes gathered counsailes by  
whych all thynges muste be iud-  
ged and dermined. To proue thys  
ye alledge these wordes.

Where so euer two or thre be  
gathered together &c. These holye  
fathers, you affirme to be the by-  
shopes and prelates. But thus to  
include the holye gooste into by-  
shopes, you exclude þ word of god.

If this be not to be discenued, sure  
I am deceyued. But it were ne-  
cessarie for you to proue the chur,  
that you speake of to be the true  
holye, and catholyke church, be-  
fore you perswade men so earnestlye  
to belyeue and stycke vnto it. But  
I saye, the church that taketh  
awaye



awaye the authoritye of goddes  
worde, or diminisheth it by anye  
meanes, is not of Christe.

But you mayster Chryspe,  
graunte youre selfe to be of thys  
churche, Ergo etc. And in myne o-  
pinion, you do naught to say that  
all holy fathers frō Christ to thys  
time, wer of the same opinion that  
you be of concernynge goddes  
worde. For I dare saye Augustine  
(whome you admytte to be of the  
verye holye church) wyll not hold  
wyth you in thys matter.

But if he woulde, the autho-  
ritye of Christe is greater. Whoe  
is it that wyll not suspecte your  
churche, seynge you set it so high  
in Lucifers place aboue Christe,  
and separate the holye goste from  
Christe, where as Christe sayeth,  
I am that I say vnto you: What  
is þ he spake vnto vs: Is it not his  
word: He saith moreouer, the wor-  
des þ I speake, are spirite & lyfe. I  
praye

praye you, master Christyne, what  
spirite ment Christe here? What  
lyfe speaketh he of? Can ther any  
man bring out of hys breast, either  
by witting, preachinge or other-  
wise teacheinge, or speakeinge, the  
sentence of the holie spirite wyth-  
out goddes worde? Is not the sen-  
tence or worde of the holye gooste  
the worde of God? Is it not to be  
vnderstand of the lyeuynge sayth  
that the holy gooste worketh in the  
soule of man in beleuing the word  
Is not the scriptur called the two  
edged sworde? Is it not also called  
the sworde of the spirite? Hape ye  
separate the spirite from the wor-  
des, seynge he calleth them spirit  
and lyfe? I thynke not. No more  
than heate can be separated from  
fire. Why then in the name  
of the holye gooste, do you vnder-  
mine Christe? The churche, you  
saye, must be iudge, and the scrip-  
ture must be wytnesse onlye. So  
must



must Christe be inferioure to me.  
For I am sure you wyll not denye  
but these holye fathers, which you  
cal the church, were & be men. And  
those you saye must be the iudges.  
And Christe to be the worde and  
promise of the father, he hymselfe  
wytnesseth sayeing. I am that I  
saye vnto you, and hym you make  
but a witnesse or iudge. Therefore  
I saye your church is to be sus-  
pected. As toucheynge the true  
spose and catholyke, church of  
Christe, which are verrye members  
of hys bodye, and he the head: this  
church hath so muche authoritie  
as the scripture geueth them, and  
take vpon them no more for the  
scripture and they are one, and for  
the scripture they leoparde theyr  
liues, as many haue done, whome  
you and your forfathers, bishopes  
and prelates haue alwayes put to  
dath. Who persecuted & prophets  
and put them to death. Who pro-  
cured

cured Christe to the crosse. Whoe  
the Apostles wyth manye othere  
holy men. Were they not byshops  
and prelates of the church. Howe  
manye godlye preachers wyth  
other good soules, hath the byshop  
of Rome put to death by the helpe  
of prelates in diuers contries syth  
he came to the supremitye, and  
beareynge arule ouer kynges and  
emperours. Hath there not ben  
some put to death here in Englad  
wythin these .xx. yeres, for speake-  
ynge agaynste the Pops pardons  
and pylgrymages, wyth suche  
lyke abuses. Was not the Pope  
chiefe of these holye fathers, whom  
you cal holye church, and woulde  
haue them iudges. But I knowe  
what you meane. You would per-  
swad the multitude, that you and  
youre church, be the verye true  
church, and haue the holye gooste  
and that what so euer you do is  
well. But whereby do ye perswade  
them.



the: By olde custome (for you haue  
nothyng else) and longe continu-  
aunce of tyme, the whyche if you  
coude beate in to the heades of  
the communalte: your reforma-  
cion of thynges that are amysse,  
shoulde be as you luste. But mai-  
ster Chrysyppe, if you were not in  
darkenelle you coude not refuse  
the light. Christ sayth, if you coti-  
nue in my worde: then are you mi-  
berye Disciples, and ye may know  
the trueth, and the trueth shall  
make you fre.

But he that refuseth me, and  
receyueth not my wordes hath  
one alredye that iudgeth hym  
the worde that I haue spoken.  
Shall iudge hym in the laste daye.  
Beholde, Christe sayeth hys wordes  
shal be iudge. All that be of Christ,  
heare Christes wordes.

Mayster Chrysyppe, my let-  
tere is longer then I thoughte it  
shoulde haue ben, howe it shal lyke  
you

you I can not tell, but hartly de-  
sire you, if you loue the truth and  
desire the glozve of God: answere  
wyth the trueth and defende the  
trueth, and do not wyllfully resist  
the truth. But defend it not with  
the authoritve of men, but wyth  
the power of God, and that wyth  
charitie, for if I haue by any mea-  
nes spoken any thynge in this let-  
ter more rigorously then charitve  
requireth whereby you myght be  
offended at me iustlye: I am redie  
in such case wyth all myne herte to  
be reformed. Wherfore I eftsones  
desire you to answere me, as it be-  
cometh a true preacher, for quiet-  
ynge of my conscience. And so do-  
ynge I comitte you to Christ and  
hys worde. Amen.

**Y**ours lookinge for an answer.  
Philip Nicolles. Written,  
xxiiij. of Aprile. M. D. lviij.

Here





Here haste thou my  
letter ( gentle rea-  
der ) euen worde for  
worde as it was de-  
liuered to mayster

Chryspe. And trueth it is, I  
wrote it immediately after my  
retourne frome hys sermon, euen  
whyle it was hotte. For it gre-  
ued me that it had not been law-  
ful for me to haue answered him  
euen incontinente before all the  
audience.

For he perswaded them al, for  
the mooste parte, that nothyng  
coude be sayde to the contrarie.  
Which greued me to heare. Not  
wythstandynge, when I hadde  
written my letter: I dyd not se  
it furth w, but paused a whyle,  
partelye, seeinge ther was suche  
a greate audience, to se whether  
any man of woship, or some bet-  
ter learned then I woulde take  
the mattier in hande. But after

I had rested bpō thys a moneth  
or. vi. weekes and perceiued that  
no man busied hym selfe in it (al  
though ther were present men of  
worship p̄tēding to haue know  
ledg) I sent furth my letter, the  
laste daie of Apriel or nere there  
aboute. And because the mesen  
ger dyd not in all thynges fulfyl  
my request, I wrote agayne to  
maister Chylspyne, desireinge  
hym to sende me an answer by  
the sayede bearer of my letter, to  
whō he gaue thys answer. That  
he would not writ, but cōmune  
wyth me him selfe. I leste him  
not thus, but win a while after  
he cam to a benefice p̄ he hath cal  
led Herbertō, belyd Totnes, and  
preached there p̄ sūday after cor  
pus Christi day, as they cal it, a p̄  
mūdaie in the morning: I wente  
to him and communed w̄ hym,  
and spent wel most p̄ whole day.  
In which cōmunicaciō, we swar  
ued not frō these .iii. questiōs. I

I re  
long  
w̄ h  
hau  
thou  
to h  
to h  
accu  
blan  
Ma  
more  
ing t  
hau  
uat c  
my c  
hold  
they  
that  
in a p  
diēce  
ted to  
let th  
ence  
I be  
poker



I resorted vnto him againe, not  
long after þ, and had much talke  
w him, al which cōmunicatiō, I  
haue not: nor wyl! babble out, al  
thought it be reported þ I came  
to him for non other purpose, but  
to haue matter to talk of, and to  
accuse him. But yet they be to  
blame so to reporte of me. For if  
Maister Chrysipine, or other þ be  
more busie peraduēture in talk-  
ing then he him selfe, can say. þ I  
haue accused him of any such pri-  
uat cōmunicatiō: let thē lay it to  
my charge, else let thē for shame  
hold theyr peace, and say þ thing  
they knowe. As for the wordes  
that he or any other shal speake  
in a pulpyt or any suche like au-  
diēce. I am sure they wilbe cōte-  
ted to heare of thē againe. If not  
let thē hēce forth desire their audi-  
ence to kepe cōsil or else truly, if  
I be presente, & heare any thing  
spoken againste god or my prince

especially agaynste the doctrine  
of Chyiste: I muste needes dis-  
close it. If they wyll blame me  
for this: I am contented to beare  
it, howe be it vnworthye in my  
owne conceyte, let other iudge.

But if he were able to defend  
it that he hadde preached, whye  
shoulde he feare to wyte to the  
defence of the same? Wherefore,  
seinge he hath receyued my let-  
ter, kepeth it, and wyl not wryte  
agayne, and yet blameth and  
fyndeth diuers fautes in it: why  
shoulde he be greued wyth me,  
for spreadeynge a broode myne  
owne doynges, to vtter myne  
owne secretes. And where as he  
was offended wyth me (although  
I haue not, nor wyl laye anye  
such priuate communicacion to  
anye mans charge, specially of  
myne owne seekyng) yet I saye  
I muste declare my meaneinge  
more playnely, in those thynges  
whiche



whych he is so muche offended  
wythall, to thentente that no  
sublynge stocke be purposely  
layed in my brothers waye, that  
he shoulde not vnderstande the  
trueth and prayse God. For al-  
though I found mayster Chris-  
pyne verie gentle and charita-  
ble to talke wythal (for þ which  
thyng I haue and wyll gyue  
him prayse) yet disputeth he sub-  
telye, and especially when he  
thynketh to haue yonge scholars  
in handelyng, as he dyd wyth  
me. For in thys he put me to my  
trumpe, because I asked him in  
my letter, what difference was  
betwene scripture wytten, and  
scripture spoken. Nowe truth it  
is, that accordyng to the Etymo-  
logie of the word, which cometh  
of *scribo*, and so to *Scriptura*: it  
can not be called Scripture, vn-  
lesse it be wytten. And so euerye  
thyng wytten, maye be called

C.iii. scrip-

scripture. And in that sentence,  
we shall fynde no difference be-  
tweene the bible and Robyn hode,  
by this name scripture, for both  
maye be called scripture. I saye,  
after the verie nature of þ word.  
To heare haue you an exāple of  
sophistrie. Let yong scholars take  
hede by me, howe they meddell  
wyth the. For whereas I mente  
simpli after the commonne blage  
and phrāse of ourespeache, meane  
inge by Scripture wrytten and  
spoke: the prophete of þ olde and  
newe testament the doctrine of  
Christe euen the verie worde of  
God, as well beyng opened by  
the mouth of the Apostles vnto  
the heares in those dayes, as  
wrytten wyth theyr owne han-  
des, and reade vnto vs nowe in  
our tyme: he nowe takeinge hys  
aduantage at þ nature of þ la-  
tine word Scriptura, out of whiche  
this englishe worde scripture is  
deri-



deriued: denieth that it maye be  
called scripture, vnlesse it be writ  
ten What other thynge is thys  
then a mere sophisticall cauil-  
cion: The scribes and pharises in  
Christes tyme ( by lyke ) had not  
learned their sophistrie or els thei  
wer not so curiouse as our mē be.  
For if thei had, thei mought haue  
asked Christ, whē he bad thei lercy  
the scriptures, what scripture he  
mēt. But Paule therfore prouē-  
ting such subtle disputig calleth  
it holy scriptur geuen by inspira-  
cion. Thus you se, a mā had nede  
(as the prouerbe goeth) to haue a  
long sponne & shal eate w<sup>th</sup> & deuill.  
It is no maruaille, though mas-  
ter Chrysostom in his lesso<sup>n</sup> not long  
sece, dyd so much cōmēd distincti-  
ons, & proued the so necessarie &  
we could not be w<sup>th</sup>out the. For he  
that shal haue to do w<sup>th</sup> such sophi-  
sters had nede to make diffinici-  
ōs, & p<sup>r</sup>emeditat his words before  
he

ii. Tim. iii.

1. Cor. 1.

he speake or wyrt them, haueing  
a respect to the distinctions that  
maye be made at euerie worde.  
Thys learneinge practised doc-  
tour duns so longe wyth his sub-  
tyle wyrt, tyll at laste he was ta-  
ken but for a detynge fole. And  
truelye thys is the practyse of  
God, to destroye wi dome of the  
wyle, and to caste awaye the vn-  
derstanding of the prudent, and  
to make the wysedome of thys  
worlde folishenesse. And at laste,  
when they are become bayne, in  
theyr owne imaginacion, & theyr  
foleysh hert blinde, they become  
verie foles, & imagyne God after  
theyr owne imaginacion, to be  
lyke a mortall man, byrdes or  
beastes &c. euen as it is to be sene  
to thys daye. For eue great lear-  
ned men, cleane contrarpe to the  
expresse commaundement of God,  
contrape to the doctrine of the  
prophetes, Apostles and al holpe  
scrip=



scriptur: wyl maintaine opē and  
manifest Idolatrye, maintaine  
and byholde it wyth toeth and  
nayle. Who woulde not wonder  
at it, if Chyste and hys Apostles  
had not diligently warned vs of  
suche thynges. Lo all thys hap-  
peneth when men do Imagyne  
wyth theyr polityke wysdome,  
leauyng the true and perfecte  
wysdome of god, and when men  
wyl ascende by crafte and deuise  
of theyr owne herte without the  
word of god. But to come againe  
to my purpose of Scripture, al-  
though I be perswaded & euerye  
thyng vnderstandeth my meane-  
yng, yet must I saye some what  
to satisfie the expectacion of the  
that loue to heare what men cā  
saye. Howe be it, in thys matter  
I thynke it not necessarie. S.  
Peter sayth. Thys shal ye know  
that no prophecie in the scriptur  
is done of any one priuate in ter. ii. Pet. i.

pretacion. For the prophecie was  
neuer brought in by the wyll of  
man, but þe holy me of god spake  
as they were moued of the holye  
gost. Nowe if I shoulde aske. S.  
Peter what he meaneth by scrip-  
ture here, I thynke he woulde  
say the word of god. But it is the  
word of god writtine would you  
say, yet doth. I. Peter say it of the  
same written worde þe holye  
men of God spake, as they were  
moued by þe holy goste. But tru-  
lye I thinke it but a vaine thing  
and euen a losse of tyme to trifle  
in suche questians which can no  
waye edifye, especially, seynge  
S. Paule doth so often diswade  
Timoth frome such folishe ques-  
tions: & exhorteth him to cleaue  
faste to the word of God If anye  
man sayth he, teache other wyse  
and agreeth not to the wholesome  
wordes of our lord Iesus Christ  
and to the doctrine of godlinesse:  
he is puffed vp, and knoweth no:

1. Cl. vi.



nothing, but wasteth his braines  
about questians and strueing of  
words, wherof sprigeth enuie &c.

After a like maner also he toke  
me vp (how be it more earnestlye  
for that I sayde, the worde was  
in the beginning and for alledg-  
ing, Chrestes wordes, I am that  
I say vnto you. Or euen y same  
thinge that I speake vnto you  
As thoughe I wente aboute to  
proue y Chreste was but a voice  
only, or a writte letter in paper.  
Thus he dalped w me & was in  
w his dictiōs, whether I met  
bi y word y voice, y breath, or the  
writte word, with manie double  
doubtes. For mi words (he saied)  
as they stode in my letter, were  
heresie. But I told him y I met  
it by y same word y the lord Je-  
sus christ taught, as Christ hym  
selfe wittnesseth. I am euen the  
very same thinge y I speake vn-  
to you. He saied that the words  
were not as I alledged them

John. 1.  
John. viii.

them. For the latyne hath (saied  
he) Ego sum qui loquor vobis. Now as  
for the alledgeinge of those woꝝ-  
des: I folow the English trans-  
latours; whose lerneynge I can  
not correcte. If he can amende  
they doinges: he shal haue good  
leane for me. Notwithstanding  
seinge that, he maketh my woꝝ-  
des so dayngerouse: I cannot but  
say more in it, although they can  
not be spokē (in my cōcept) more  
playne to be vnderstād, thē they  
be alredy writtē. For. I John say-  
eth. The worde was in ē begin-  
ning & the word was w god and  
God was the worde. Nowe, to de-  
nye that Chyste is the worde of  
God, by whiche all thinges were  
made: I say is anheresie in deed.  
Therefore it must nedes be graū-  
ted that Chyste was and is the  
worde of God.

psal. cxviii

Thy worde Lorde (sayeth the  
prophete) is a lanterne to my fet  
and



and a light to my pathes. Againe  
he sayeth. When thy worde goeth forth, it geueth lyght and vnderstandeynge euen to babes. *Idem. Cxiii.*

Nowe what meaneth he by this worde that geueth thys lyght? Chyiste sayth, I am come a light into þe world, that who so euer beleueth in me should not abyde in darknes. By these & many other it wyl appeare, Chyiste to be the true worde of God. But nowe wyl they graunte that Chyiste is the worde that came from the father, the lyghte of the worlde the life of the worlde, as Moyses *Deute. xxxii.* saith: set your hertes on þe words that I testifie, sayeth he, for it is no bayne worde but your lyfe. I am sure I say, they wyl graunte Chyiste to be the worde, but not the worde wyttyn whyche we reade in the boke. In dede, to say that Chyiste maye be wrytten in paper, or that the letters whiche  
be

be made of incke & paper should  
be Christe: were a sonde opinion  
and suche as I neuer harde of.  
But the wordes written in the  
boke, which we cal the scripture.  
As the prophetes from Moyses  
to Christ, and the doctrine of the  
apostles, which is written we cal  
it the Gospel, we call it the scrip-  
tures we cal it þe newe testament  
and the olde these wordes writ-  
ten in a boke, beinge reade vnto  
the people, to enstruction & edify-  
ing of þe cōgregatiō is the word  
of god, yea Christ þe breade of life  
which came frō heauē so þe whoso  
30. vi. eateth therof, shal liue euer. The  
words that Moyses dyd testifie  
vnto the children of Israell, and  
sayed vnto them it is no bayre  
word but your life: be they not  
writte? And be they not our life  
as wel as theyrs? But what life  
cā thei be vnto vs, if thei be kept  
frō vs so that we know the not?  
Dyd



Whyd Moyses hyde them away,  
and say they would make me he-  
retikes: But all suche as do euil  
hate the lyght, and come not to  
it that they: deues should not be **John. iii.**  
reproued but he that doeth the  
trueth cometh to the lyght, that  
his workes maye be knownen, for  
they be done in God.

Agayne, I am the lyghte of  
the world sayeth Christe. Whye  
shoulde these men refuse goddes  
word to be their light, if they wer  
of god: whie should they feare to  
saye y<sup>e</sup> Christes worde is Christe  
the worde of the father, the light  
that lyghneth al men that come **Isai. viii.**  
vnto hym: Elsaye sayth. If anye  
man want light, let him loke vpon  
the lawe and testimonies.

What meaneth he by the lawe  
and testimonies: meaneth he not  
the scripture or written word of  
God, shall we not ther fynde the  
lighte: I woulde aske these dis-

D. i.

puters

Rom. 1

11. 10. 11

11. 10. 11

John. xli

puters of the worlde . Whether  
the Gospell be witten or no : I  
thynke they wyll graunte that it  
is witten. Well Saynt Paule  
sayth, he is not a shamed of þe Gos-  
pell of Chyiste , for it is the powre  
of God, whiche saueth all that be-  
leue . Nowe is this gospel witten  
for our learneing, & saueth as ma-  
ny as beleue. Marke wel the bele-  
uers are not saued because it is  
wittē but they be saued , because  
they beleue þe which is writē. Marke  
these philosophers, whether þe wor-  
des that Chyiste speake be witten  
or no : I trowe the Euangelistes  
haue witten the moste necessarye  
thynges , yea the verie secretes &  
hyd thynges. If Chyistes wordes  
which he spake be writtē, then the  
word þe is witten shal iudge these  
vnbeleauers in the laste daye. For  
thus sayth Chyiste . He þe refuseth  
me and receyueth not my wordes :  
hath one alredye þe iudgeth hym.

The



The word (sayth he) that I haue  
spoken, that iudge him in the last  
day. Understand nowe gentle rea-  
der, & these fathers, would vnder-  
colours plucke a waye the great  
authoritie of the scriptures, and  
diminish (thorowe subtyle dis-  
putinge) & efficacie and strength  
of the gospel. Whether they do  
of hatred to gods word, or blind-  
nes and ignorauice in the same,  
or else for lucers sake, I cannot  
tell But to far wander they out  
of the waye. But I exhorte the  
though they be to far on the left  
hand, rune not & to far on & right  
hande. Enter in at the straye  
gate, for wyde is the gate, and  
broad is the way that leadeth to  
destructio, & many ther be &, go Math. vii.  
in ther at. But straye is & gate  
and narrowe is the waye that  
leadeth vnto lyfe and fewe ther-  
be & fynd it. Thys is therfore the  
sume of thys disputacio & Christ

**Joh. viii.**

**Joh. xv.**

is the word and wisdom of the  
father, in whom who so beleeueth  
hath everlastinge lyfe. Thys  
same word did he him self preach  
and sayeth. If you abyde in me  
any my wordes abyde in you: ye  
shall have what you wyl; and it  
shall be done vnto you. Beholde  
it her as he sayde before. If you  
continue in my wordes: nowe  
he sayeth. If you byd in me and  
my wordes abid in you. By this  
it is euident, that Chyste is the  
worde, even that worde whiche  
was preached fro the beginning  
is preached nowe, and shall be to  
the ende. And although Chyste  
be not, as is sayde, in ke and pa-  
per, or a worde closed in a boke as  
thought we mought saye, looe,  
here in thys boke is Chyste, or in  
that boke is Chyste: yet was it  
the wyl of God that thys hea-  
venly doctrine shoulde be writ-  
ten, and that it shoulde remaine  
with



wyth vs, and also that these wor-  
des wytten beinge reade vnto  
vs, shoulde be vnto vs, euē that  
same worde that Chyste spake  
when he sayed. He that is of god  
heareth gods worde. And euen  
the verie same ( to them that be-  
leue) that he speaketh of sayeing  
If anye man kepe my worde, he  
shal neuer se death. And to them  
that beleue not: the same that  
he sayeth shall iudge the vnbele-  
uers in the last daye.

Now marke well, I besech the John. 24  
and consider wyth thy selfe, the  
mischiefe of these subtyl sophi-  
sters. They make it wouderfull  
dayngerouse, to call the scriptur  
Chyste. They be verie carefull  
to haue the true worship of god  
preserued and kepte. And they  
feeare leaste we wyll fall to wor-  
shipinge of the verie boke wher  
in the testimonies of Chyste be  
wytten. And therfore do they

withdrowe all men from reade-  
inge and heareing it as much as  
they can. But alas, why be they  
not so ware and dayngerous in  
theyr laye mens booke (as they  
cal them) whiche al the scripturs  
crie out vpon, euen from the be-  
gynninge of the olde testament to  
the later ende of the new. By the  
which booke (or rather abomina-  
ble Idoles) it is open and mani-  
fest, that muche Idolatrie hath  
ben comitted, yea & wilbe stil, so  
longe as ther is one left standing  
in the temples.

The word of god, the doctrine  
of Christe, whiche he and his A-  
postles so earnestly taught, ex-  
horted & commaunded to harken  
vnto, to beleaue and folowe (al-  
most al the bible is nothing else)  
this I say, they canot suffer any  
man to haue to do with al. They  
haue burned it fro tyme to tyme  
they burned the readers of it, as  
all



al the worlde can testifie. It is  
manifeste, that they beare little  
good wyll to it vnto thys daye.  
But these mahomets puppetes &  
veri Idolles, which haue not one  
word in al scriptur for them, but  
contrarie, to the vtter abolish-  
inge of them, these they can suf-  
fer to be called Christe saynte sa-  
uoure, saynte Sundaye, the ho-  
lye trinitie, oure ladye of Pitte  
oure ladye of grace, oure ladye I  
can not tell wherof. Alhallowes  
wyth a thousand like names. Yea  
they can abyde that the people  
should worship those stil, for they  
neuer preach agaynste them, but  
rather defende them, to kepe the  
vnlearned in their blindnesse styll.  
Alas, to open is your doyng  
nowe. O you catholyke fathers)  
euerye chylde maye perceyue  
your blinde doctrine.

Yet wyl not you cease to exalt  
this false church & congregaciō of

D. 111.

Decey-

ceyuers, eue a boue god him selfe  
11. Act. 11. For God was the worde, and a  
boue the rule of thys worde, sete  
ye your owne traditions, in the  
name of Chyistes church. Thus  
dyd Chyiste prophecie that you  
shoulde come, & that you shoulde  
19. Math. xxiii. dooe miracles and wonders. In  
so much that euen the verie e-  
lect (if it were possible) shoulde be  
brought into errowe. And saint  
11. Thes. ii. Paule sayth you shal come with  
1. Timoth. iii. lyinge signes and wonders, and  
wyth al deceyueablenesse of bri-  
ghtuousnesse. And to Timoth  
he sayeth, you shal forbyde ma-  
riage and meates.

So playne is it in al the scrip-  
ture, that thei that read it must  
neades vnderstand it. Most eui-  
dent and playne it is, that ye be  
euen of the same sinful synagoge  
For trulye the spouse of Chyiste  
is obedient to hir brydgrome.

The disciples of Chyiste, herken  
to



to they? Maister. And doubtles  
we can not be Christes verie dis-  
ciples, vnlesse we continue in his  
doctrine. He þis of God heareth  
goddes worde. and he that kepe-  
th thys worde, shall neuer se  
deathe.

Moyles sayeth. You shall put  
nothinge to the worde whiche I  
commaunde you, neyther take  
ought ther from etc. Agayne.

Dent. xiii.

Iosue. i.

You shall turne neyther to the  
ryght hande, neither to the lefte  
but in the waye which your lord  
god comaundeth, shal ye walke.  
What more playne comaunde-  
ment can ther be fore the establi-  
ment of the authoritie of þe word  
of god? Moisesbad, the childre of  
Israel shoulde write them vpon  
the postes of ther doores, & bynde  
them vpon theyr handes to teach  
their children. He sayeth they be  
oure lyfe. And Christe sayth his  
wordes be spirit and life. Saint

Dent. vi.  
xxv.

John. vi.

De.

Peter saith we haue a sure word  
of prophecie, & ye do well to take  
hede ther vnto, as vnto the light  
that shineth in a darcke place &c

If this worde were not wryt-  
ten, that we myght knowe why-  
ther to resorte for al thys: what  
should it auaille al these wordes?  
What were we the nere for all  
these testimonies, if the sume of  
Christes doctrine were not writ-  
te, and the certaynetie vnkowen?  
Whoe should be certayne of hys  
sayeth, if we had not a prescripte  
and certayne doctryne where-  
unto wee moughte resorte to  
haue thys in fallible veritye.

Math. vii.

13. 14.

15. 16.

17. 18.

Galath. i.

Howe shoulde we knowe these  
falle prophetes to come in shipes  
clothing outwardly, & inwardly  
be rauenynge woulfes: if we had  
not a sure touche stone to trye  
theyr doctrine wyth all? If anye  
man preache vnto you (sayeth  
Paul) other then þ which is prea-  
ched



ched alredye, althoughe it were  
an angell frome heauen: let it be  
accursed. What be we þ nere of  
these wordes: if we be in doubt  
wher to fynde this Gospell? But  
I testifie vnto euerie man (sayth  
saynte Iohn) that heareth the  
wordes of prophesie of thys boke  
If any man shal adde vnto these  
thynges: God shal ad vnto hym  
the plages that are wytten in  
thys boke. And if anye man shal  
mynishe of þ wordes of the boke  
of thys prophesie: God shal take  
a waye his parte out of the boke  
of lyfe. etc. To conclude therfore  
I saye playnelye, that to denye  
the scripture, the Prophetes  
and Apostles, whose prophesies  
are wytten in the Byble, to be  
a sufficiente doctryne and en-  
struction necessarye for oure sal-  
uacion, or to saye that it oughte  
not to be the touche stonne and  
triall

Apoc. xxi.

trial of al other doctrines aboue  
all other doctrines of anye other  
men, aboue theyr lawes, de-  
cres and customes or cere-  
monies (beside thys booke)  
whether it be of men or  
angelles: it is not only  
heresie, but also a di-  
uellishe and dam-  
nable doctrine.

Nowe to  
our bul-  
warke.

¶

¶



**The bulwarke of  
defence.**



**A** his is chiesly  
to be noted, &  
gods worde is  
neuer spred a-  
bode, wyth-  
out contenci-  
on, strife, and  
much troble, as Christe him selfe  
affirmeth sayeynge. Think ye  
not that I come to sende peace, math. x.  
but a sworde. For I am come to  
set variance betwene the father  
and the sonne, the mothere and  
the daughter etc. For what agre-  
ment can there be betwene a be-  
leuinge sonne and unbeleueinge  
father and so contrarye. Nowe  
sayeth Christ. He that loueth fa-  
ther and mother more then me:  
is not mete for me etc. He & find-  
eth his lyfe shall lose it. And he &  
loseth his life for my sake shall  
find it. Marke thys also, & byno  
thys.

thyng do these false deceiters, be  
gilde þ simplicity of þ multitude  
so muche as by the name of our  
fathers, by custome & longe con-  
tinuance of tyme, by whiche  
thynges they confirme their  
church. For loke what hath bene  
done of our elders and forfathers  
that is they: gospel. To breake  
these traditions and customes:  
is to breake they: whole religion.  
The scribes and phariseis, axed  
Christe why walke not thy disci-  
ples after the traditions of the el-  
ders, but eate breade wyth vn-  
washed handes: &c. Lyke wyse  
these Hypocrites, when they se  
anye man breake an olde custom,  
thoughe it be but eatyng of an  
egge vpon a frydaye, howe gre-  
uously take they the mattier:  
But euen as Christe answered  
the phariseis and scribes: so may  
I ryghte well answer these fa-  
thers sayinge. Full wel hath E-  
saie

Math. vii.

Esaie. xxi.



saith prophetied of you Hypocrites  
as it is written (marke here, that  
Christe goeth to the scripture)  
Thys people drawe nere me with  
theyr lippes: but theyr herte is Colos. 2.  
fare frome me. But in vayne do  
they serue me whylle they teache  
suche doctrynes as are nothyng  
but the commaundementes of  
men. Ye leaue the commaunde-  
ment of god: & kepe the tradiciōs  
of men. In the stead of washing  
of cuppes & cruses: what a sort of  
ceremonies haue we: what is ho-  
lye brea de: what is holye water?  
What be holye candeles: What  
are holye bowes: Touche not  
the water in the fonte, handle  
not the chalice nor the corporace.  
Good lord what a sorte of suche  
commaundementes haue we of  
oure fore fathers: Oh, howe  
goodlye haue you caste asyde  
the commaundementes of  
God to maynetayne your owne  
tra-

traditions? I beseech the (good  
christian reader) mark how vehem-  
mente the Lord Jesus is hym-  
selfe agaynste the beggarly tra-  
ditions of men to bringe vs to  
the wyll and commaundement  
of God. What can the gratest  
doctour of the all, say vnto this?  
Is it not open and manifeste to  
all the worlde that for breakeing  
of these triflinge and foolish tra-  
ditions, they haue punished men  
greuouselye, euen wyth death.  
And haue we not sene the brea-  
kers of goodes commaundemen-  
tes unpunished at all? As swe-  
ars, drunckardes, whoredome,  
and auoutrie wyth all the rest.  
Beholde, all christendome kno-  
weth, that thys is no lye. My  
truste is therfore, that the magi-  
strates wyll nowe loke vpon this  
gear. For these felowes neuer go  
about any suche thyng. But be-  
cause they blinde the ignorant  
foyles



loules wyth holye doctours, holy  
fathers, and holye churche from  
Christes tyme hytherto: you shal  
se what the holye doctours say, e-  
ue such as be most auncient and  
best learned, as they them selues  
will graunte.

Augustine in an epistle to For-  
tunatus, hath these wordes.

Epist. clxxxviii.

We ought not to regarde and e-  
steme the disputacions of any,  
thoughe they be neuer so catho-  
lyke and well praysed, as canno-  
nicall scripture, but that we may  
saueing the reuerce that ought  
to be geuen vnto suche men, re-  
proue and spue out agayne, any  
thyng in theyr wyttynge, if  
perchaunce we fynde that they  
vnderstande ought in theyr wi-  
tynge, otherwyle then the truth  
hath, whiche is percepued by the  
helpe of God, nether by oure sel-  
ues oz other. &c.

Suche a one am I in other

E. i. mens

mens wyttinges: as I would o-  
ther men should be in myne.

*Lib. iiii.  
Fol. clxi.* If we had no moe sayeinges  
of the doctours, but thys one,  
consideringe the estimacion Au-  
gustine is in: it were inoughe to  
ouerthrowe all the confidence  
that they woulde teach vs to  
haue in mens wyttinges, besyde  
gods worde. But heare an other  
He wyteth vnto Hierome and  
sayeth. I haue learned to geue  
this feare and honoure onely, vnto  
the wytters whiche be called  
canonicall: & I stedfastly beleue  
that none of them haue erred in  
wyttinge. For if I finde anye  
thinge in those letters & semeth  
contrary to the trueth: either I  
thinke the booke not to be true, or  
the translater hath not truelye  
folowed his copie, or else I think  
berilye I do not vnderstande it.  
But I read al other wyters, sai-  
eth he, after this maner, that I  
thinke



think, be they neuer so holy and  
well learned, that it whiche they  
haue witten is not straye way  
true because they haue thought  
so: but because they coulde make  
me beleue it either by those cano-  
nical authoures, or else by some  
probable and sure reasone, which  
dissenteth not frō the truethe. He  
writeth agaynste one Crescensius  
the grāmariā sayinge. I am not  
bound by the authoritie of this E-  
pistle, because I do not cōpt and  
esteme Ciprians letters as cano-  
nicall & of lyke authoritie w the  
scripturs, but I way the & pōder  
the by the scripture. If I finde  
any thing in the agreinge w the  
authoritie of holy scripture: I re-  
ceyue it with his prasse. But if it  
agre not w his leaue & fauour I  
refuse & for sake it. Againe in his  
treatise of shepherdes. He hath  
ordeined y hilles of Israell (sayth  
he) y authours of holy scripturs

Libro. ii, Cap.  
xxiii.

Tractatu pos-  
teriorum.

E. ii,

Ther

There feade ye, that you maye  
feade falfelye. What so euer ye  
heare of that: let it sauoure well  
wyth you, whatseuer is besides  
that, spite it out agayne, lest ye  
erre in the clowde. Addict youre  
selues to the meaneynge of the  
scripture.

There is the deyntie of y<sup>e</sup> hert  
there is no poylen, no strayinge  
thyng, ther onelye is the mooste  
holesome feadeyng. Beholde the  
mynde of this great doctour, na  
med to be one of the greatesse  
clarkes that wrot sence the apo=  
steles tyme. He woulde haue no  
mans doctryne, what soeuer he  
be, to be compared to the holye  
scriptures. In hys owne wyrt=  
tynges he warneth vs, that we  
shoulde not geue ouer much cre=  
dence, in the thynges, sayeth he,  
that you thynke your selfe suer,  
vnles ye surely vnderstande it:  
belcue it not so stidfastely. And  
wyte

Augustinus in  
prologo tertii.  
lib. De Trini  
tate.



wrytyng to Vincentius, he graunteth that he hath wryten some thynges worthye to be blamed, and therefore sayth that he hath made a booke of retractacions, reuoking and calling agayne that which he had made before, that the readers thereby maye learne that al his wrytinges in al points dyd not please hym. This diffidence had Augustine in his wrytinges, that in no case he would compare them wyth the scripture. And loke what opinion he had of his owne wrytinges: euen the same had he in al other mens besides the canonically scriptures. For he sayth in his booke of retractaciōs, I cā not nor ought to deme sayth he, but, lyke as in myne elders so are many thynges in so many seuerall workes & I haue made, whiche maye be blamed wythout rayshnes, & with good iudgment.

Idem ad Vincentian.

Epist. xlviii.

If Austen wyl haue no credence  
geuen to mens wytinges, whe-  
ther they be byshops, or what so-  
euer they be oulesse they bringe  
the authoite of scripture to the  
as he writteth to Vincentius.  
We must make a differēce (sayth  
he) betwene mens wyttinges  
He nameth Hilarie, Ciprian, and  
Agrippie, which be lyke were by-  
shopes, and the canonically scrip-  
tures. For they ought not so to  
be reade (sayth he) as though we  
might geue furth suche testimo-  
nies of them that it shoulde not  
be lawefull to thinke other wyse  
then they affirme. For peraduen-  
ture, they vnderstande it other-  
wyse the y truth requireth. He y  
lusteth to searche Austens workes  
shal find many thinges cōtrarie  
to their proude doctrine & kycking  
against y scriptures, yea cōtrarie  
almost, to al theyr blind erroures  
In so much that I haue mer-  
uay-



wayled, that they haue had him  
so longe in such estimacion, and  
had not rather condemned hym  
for an heretike. Als for the autho  
ritie of mens doctrine besyde the  
scripture, he can not abyde. But  
in all thynges he wylleth vs to  
haue respect to the scripture euē  
in prayseing god (sayeth he) let it  
be done as he hath appoynted,  
lest in steppinge a syde, we offend  
him that we would prayse. And  
agaynste fanstus, he wryteth euē  
the same we must not tourne, ei  
ther to the right hand, neither to  
þe lyfte, no not in þe prayse that we  
geue to god. But even the same  
praises, sayeth he, must we frame  
according to þe wil of þe scriptur.  
And in þe xvi, Cha. he sayth, that  
they which would teach þe people  
any other thing the þe canonical  
scriptures are not only false pro  
phets but theaues & robbers euē  
of our sauoure. How cā our olde  
cathe-

Austinus sus  
per Gal.  
cxliii.  
Lib. vi. Cap  
xliii.

catholike fathers abyde thys fe-  
lowe. He calleth the false pro-  
phetes, theaues and robbar.  
It is tyme the popes excommu-  
nication were out for hym. He  
writeth agaynste the Maniches  
and sayeth. Dispise you the scrip-  
tures, whiche are commaunded  
and established with so great au-  
thoritye? You do no miracles,  
whiche if you dyd, yet we would  
be ware of them in you, because  
the Lorde teacheth vs to beware  
of suche saynge. Ther shall aryse  
many false Christes etc. Many  
no places maye there be founde  
in this mans workes, which they  
maye be ashamed to heare, if it  
were needfull. But because they  
shall not conceyue al ther malise  
against Austen, and parauecture  
haue hym in examinacion, for  
handeringe these holpe fathers  
ye shal heare what Hierome say-  
eth. He declareth. Christ speak-  
eth



eth in Peter, in Paule, and that  
of the people and princes, & scrip-  
ture is to be vnderstanded of the  
doctrine of the Apostles. Of those  
sayeth he, which were in it, & not  
of those which we beholde now.

And marke what he sayeth  
Those that were, and not thoe  
that be, that ye moughte vnder-  
stande that what so euer shalbe  
sayed after the Apostles tyme:  
let it be cut a way sayth he, for it  
hath none authoritie afterward.  
Therefore, if ther be any S. after  
the Apostles tyme he hath none  
authorite, for thei come to late to  
be allowed, quia nō fuerūt in ea,  
sayeth he. If & saints must geue  
place to the holie scripture, and  
haue none authoritie belydes  
that: than what are they that  
make articles of our fayth: or at  
least condemne the for heretikes  
that wyl not receyue that doc-  
trine that hath none authoritie

of

of þ scripture, but rather against  
the scripture. The same Jerome  
vpon Jeremie sayth. And they  
haue gone after straing gods, as  
they fathers taught them. etc.  
Therefore (sayeth he) neither of  
our forefathers nor of our elders  
is the erroure to be folowed, but  
the authoritie of the scripture  
and the cōmaundemente of God  
which teacheth vs. The same Je-  
rome vpon Ezechiel, sayth also þ  
we maye sinne as muche whē we  
think in our owne opinion þ we  
do wel: as whē we willingly do  
naught. He writeth vpon þ pro-  
phet Nahum, & sayth, þ against  
the cōing of Christ: þ people shall  
fle to the scripture, & their studie  
shalbe allowed, because they shal  
not find anye to teach them, and  
the faultfulnesse of their teach-  
ers shalbe rebuked. Marke  
wel thys prophesi, for suerelye it  
byteth. He writeth vpon Math.  
and



and sayth. Anye thing that hath  
not authoritie of s<sup>c</sup> scriptur may  
as sonebe reiected & despiced, as  
approued and alowed. Againe to  
Ctesiphō he sayth. What soeuer To mo. v.

we affirme, we must do it by the  
testimonies of holie scripture.

What soeuer is done without  
these booke, is in nowyse to be re  
ceyued. Do these doctours set so  
little by the authoritie of god=  
des worde, as our men woulde Capit. xlv.

perswade vs?

Do they not rather attribute  
al together to the scripture? Am  
brose also in the booke of paradise

upon this that Eue added to the  
wordes of the Lorde (Neythere Tomo. xl. Ca.  
pite. lli.

Shall ye touche the tye) We  
do learne by this present lessone,  
sayeth he, that wee ought to ad  
nothyng to the worde of God,  
no thoughe wee do of it good in  
tent or warines. Capit. xxviii.

For if thou either ad any thing

or

or take ought frome it : thou seemest to be a trangressour of the commaundemente. Heare haue you Ambrose also, which can not in any wyse suffer the wysdome of man to be equale with scripture, but that in all thynges we should leane to that.

For though our meaneing be neuer so good : yet muste we not truste oure owne wyttes. Thus he writeth vpon these wordes of the Epistle to the Romaynes, be ye all of one mynde, thys may be  
**Cap. i.** by God, sayeth he, but by mans wysdome can it neuer be. And vpon the begynnyng of the fyrste Epistle to the Corinthyans he sayth that the philosophers, when they first began to preach Christ they preached hym by the wysdome of the worlde, and reiected the lawe and prophetes. And agayne writing to Gratianus Augustus, he sayeth, that by Arians gate



gate all the colour of theyr wyck-  
kednesse out of philosophie. Yet D: fide. ca. 12.  
woulde oure diuines perswade  
vs, that they got it by reacyng  
of scripture, and expoundeing  
it after theyr owne sence. And  
therefore ther was no remedy to  
ouer come them, but wyth some  
other learneinge for they were  
perfecte in the scriptures. Not-  
withstandinge. Gregorie, wryt-  
tyng vpon Job sayeth This ca-  
nonicall scripture passeth all sci-  
ence, all doctrine wythout com-  
parisone. Thys onely preacheth  
the trueth, calleth to the heauen-  
lye contrey, it entiseth the herte  
of þe reader fro earthly desires to  
heauenly thinges. Beholde, gen-  
tle reader, they boast them selues  
of the old holy doctours fro Chri-  
stes tyme hythereto and yet the  
doctours the selues make cleane  
agaynste them. Originne wryt-  
tinge vpon the prophet Jeremy  
saye

sayeth It is nedfull & necessary  
for vs to cal þe holy scriptures to  
witnes. For our lēses & our expo  
sitions (sayth he) wout these wit  
nesses, are not to beleued. After  
this sorte also he exposideth this  
saying, vnder. ii. or iii. witnesses  
vnder. ii. þe is the newe & old testa  
mēt, vnder thre þe is, þe gospel, the  
prophetes & apostles. Againe bp  
on þe Ro. he sayth. Paul gaue the  
doctours an ensāple to speake no  
thyng but they could proue it by  
the scripture. For if he beinge so  
great & such an apostle, did not be  
leue his sayinges sufficiently ex  
cept he taught it to be writtē in  
the law & prophetes þe he speake  
how much more ought we which  
be far inferiour to him to obserue  
these thinges þe we do not bringe  
forth our owne doctrine whē we  
preache, sayth he, but þe sētence of  
þe holy gost. Here haue you also  
the mind of Origen, a great clark  
whō they alledge verie oftē. Cy=



pr̄ia writeth to one Cecilius not  
ing vpon these wordes of Christ. *1 Ch. iii.*  
If ye do þ̄ I cōmaūd you thē are *Epist. iii.*  
ye my fr̄edes. And þ̄ Christ onely  
ought to be harde: þ̄ father wit-  
nesseth fr̄o heauē saying. This is  
my welbeloued son, in whō I am  
wel pleased, heare him. Wherfor  
if onely Christ must be heard we  
ought not take hed what ani mā  
hath thought good to be done be-  
fore vs, but what christ hath first  
done which was before al mē. Nei-  
ther ought we to follow þ̄ custom  
of mā: but þ̄ truth of god. Seing  
god spaketh bi his prophet Esa, &  
sayth. Thei worship me in vaine  
teaching þ̄ cōmaūdemētes & pre-  
ceptes of mē. And againe in the  
gospel. Ye cast away þ̄ cōmaūde-  
mentes of god, þ̄ ye mought esta-  
blishe your owne tradiciōs. And  
therfore, deare brother If any of  
our fathers, other by ignorance  
or simplicitie, haue not obserued  
this & kept þ̄ þ̄ lord hath taught

vs to do by his example and go-  
uernance: pardone and forge-  
uenesse thowwe the goodnesse of  
the Lorde maye be graunted to  
theyr simplicitie. But vnto vs it  
can not be so graunted, which be  
admonished and instructed of  
the Lorde &c. He that lusteth to  
se more of thys, let hym loke the  
place and reade farther, and he  
shall fynde lyke wordes in hys  
thyrde treatise of the simplicitie  
of prelates. And whereas men be  
so muche addycte to theyr cu-  
stomes, ysame Ciprian sayth. Ne-  
ther y custome whiche hath crept  
in among some, ought to be a let  
whereby the trueth shoulde not  
preuaile and ouer come. For the  
custome wythout the truth is an  
old errour. Therfore, let vs leaue  
the erreure and folow the truth  
All the doctours agree wholelye  
in thys, that the scripture is the  
touchstone, a recourse for al chri-  
stian



stent men to seeke vnto, to be sure  
of theyr sayeth, and to haue qui-  
etnes of conscience. And what ex-  
hortacions Chrysostom geueth  
to all men for the studie of ho-  
lye scriptures: appeareth in hys  
thied sermon De Lazaro. And  
vpon John the. xvi. Homelye, in  
the end. Also vpon John the. iiii.  
Homelie and. iiii. Chapt, and in  
diuers other places. Nothynge  
doeth he so earnestly beate into  
oure heades as the study of scrip-  
ture. And I thynke there is no  
doctoure that writeth vpon the  
scripture: that doeth not lyke  
wise and geueth it euen suche a  
rowme and prehemynence, that  
all other doctrines muste geue  
place. Irenaeus sayeth. To go a-  
bout wyth þe diuine scriptures,  
whiche is the vndoubted trueth  
is to build an house vpon a strōg  
rocke: but all other doctryne  
what so euer it be: is to builde  
I. i. a weake

1. Cor. i. Cap.  
1. vi.

a weake house vpon an vn-  
certaine place of quicke sand, which  
wilbe lightli ouer throwe. Now  
if these authorities be not suffi-  
cient to stoppe theyr mouthes: I  
thynke they wyll neuer be an-  
swered. For where as the scrip-  
ture is so hard to be vnderstand  
and therefore loke vpon the doc-  
tours (saye they) and beleue the  
catholyke churche whiche hath  
continued frome Christes tyme  
hitherto, we can shewe (say they)  
bi auncient wyters from tyme  
to tyme sence Christs ascention.  
But what can these men shewe?  
Be not these wytters whiche I  
haue reherfed, of the chieffest of  
thē? And al thes agre that their  
wytynges must be tried by the  
scripture, and if that allowe thē  
not they would not in any wise  
that we should beleue them.

This is a wonderfull thyng  
if they would haue vs geue such  
cre-



credite to the doctours whiche  
thyng the docters tgem selues  
forbyd. But they haue alwayes  
this sayeing of Augustine in  
their mouthes. I would not be-  
leue the gospel except the autho-  
ritie of the church did moue me.  
Nowe as sone as they haue  
caught thys in theyr sermons:  
thei triumph. Lo (say they) what  
authorite did this g eat doctour  
attribute to þ church in so much  
that þ gospel is and must be iud-  
ged by þ church. For wout the  
church, he would not beleue chri-  
stes gospel manye wordes haue  
they which I cā not remembre.  
But me think, these mē mought  
be answered out of Augustines  
owne wordes before rehearsed.  
For he wil geue no such credit to  
any mans wittinges what so e-  
uer he be as he doth to the scrip-  
ture neither would he þ any mā  
F.ii. should

woulde he that any man should  
so esteeme his wryttinges. For al  
hys wryttinges dooe not please  
hym. Therefore if they wil haue  
me beleue Augustines wordes:  
they muste proue them true bye  
the scripture or else by some o-  
ther probable and sure reason  
that dissenteth not frome the  
trueth, else maye not I beleue  
Augustens wordes. For thys he  
counselleth hym selfe. But ad-  
mytte Augustens wordes to be  
true wythout anye contradicti-  
on. What moughte then be say-  
ed to it? These be Augustines  
wordes, I shoulde not beleue  
the Gospell, onlesse the authori-  
tye of the churche moued me.

Nowe I aske you what the au-  
thority of the churche is. What  
cal you þ authorite of þ churche?  
Is it long continuance of time?  
The was christes doctrine doubt-  
ful. For the scribes and phariseis  
had



had that on theyr syde. Or is it  
the greater number? With lyke  
reasons we maye refuse Chyristes  
Gospell.

For many be called, sayeth he,  
and fewe elected. Or else was it  
the consent of learned wise men?  
All thys had the great byshopes  
and high pristes in chrystes time.  
For they were great learned and  
wyse men. But saynt Paule ar Corh. 1.  
eth, wher be the wyse? Wher are  
the scribes? where are the dispu-  
ters of the worlde? Hath not god  
made the wysdome of the worlde  
foleishenesse? Therfore let them  
declare vnto me the verie true  
authoritye of the churche. And  
I make heare distinctiō of chur-  
ches. For Chyriste and the Apo-  
stles haue prophycied that theyr  
shal come false prophetes in Chri-  
stes name, and shal rise euen fro  
amonge our selues & shal speake  
peruerse doctryne. These men

I.iii.

come

come in Chyistes name and saye  
they be chyistes church. But I  
am assured, they be not Chyistes  
true spouse. For Lira wytinge  
Math. xij. vpon Mathe sayth. The church  
standeth not in men, by the rea-  
son of spirituall powre or secu-  
lar dignitie. For many princes  
and many popes and other infe-  
riour persones, haue swarued  
frome the fayth. Wherefore the  
church doth stande in those per-  
sones, in whom is þ true know-  
ledge and cōfession of fayth and  
veritie. Therefore it must nedes  
by Lira his wordes consist in  
the scriptures. For the gyfte of  
fayeth and vnderstandeynge  
the veritye, is the workeynge  
of the holye spirite, that confor-  
tour which the Lorde promised  
to those that beleue hys worde.  
But because they alledge me  
Austens wordes I wyl answer  
thē with Austen him selfe, wy-  
tynge



tinge vpon the. lviij. psal. wee  
speake true thynges (sayth he)  
which haue heard true thynges  
that the lord sayth, not that mā  
sayth. It may be that man may  
lie, it can not be that god should  
lye. By the worde of trueth do I  
knowe Christe the same verie  
trueth. By the worde of trueth  
do I knowe the church to be par  
taker of the trueth.

Nowe lette them scan these  
wordes and tell me where the  
true touchestone is. Then  
alledge they these wordes of  
Christe.

Math. xx.

I haue yet muche to saye vnto  
you, but you can not now  
beare it a waye. Nowe be it,  
when the spirite of the trueth  
commeth: he shall leade you into  
all trueth. & etc.

And agayne. Manye other  
tokens dyd Iesus befoze hys  
dys-

**John. x.**

**Tractatu. xlii  
Capit. ix.**

**Super John  
Capit. xii.**

his disciples. Which are not wri-  
ten, in this booke. Here stape they  
and go no farther, for it foloweth.  
But these are witten, that you  
shoulde beleue .et c. But seynge  
we haue begone wyth Saynt  
Augustine, we wyll ende wyth  
him. He wyrteth vpon this same  
place of John and sayeth. They  
were chosen and pycked out, as  
many as were thought necessa-  
rie and sufficient for the saluaci-  
on of the faythfull. Cirillus also  
affirmeth the same, and sayeth  
more ouer, that althynge that  
the wyrtters thought sufficient,  
boeth for the sayeth and beleue,  
and also for ꝑ cōuersaciō of men  
that wee myghte shyne wyth  
a ryghte and perfecte sayeth,  
and wyth true workes and ver-  
tues, and so come to the kyng-  
dome of heauen thorowe oure  
Lorde Christe. He wyrteth sayeth  
he, and therefore it is a newe  
lye



ye, inuented in þ diuilles shop,  
to saye that all the articles of  
oure christian fayeth can not be  
proued by scripture, and mens  
tradicions bysyde the scripture  
be goode workes and please God  
These be Cyrillus workes. And  
therefore sayeth Saynte Am-  
bros, in hys fourth booke of vir-  
gines. All newe thynges that  
Christe hath not taught we law-  
fully condemne. For vnto fayth-  
ful men sayeth he Christe is the  
waye. If Christe therefore haue  
not taught that we teache (say-  
eth he) we iudge it to be detesta-  
ble. Nowe let these holpe fathers  
turne and tolle these olde holpe  
doctours, and let them fynde me  
out a touchston some other wher  
For these doctours say playnely  
the worde of God the holy scrip-  
ture, the word of truth is þ rule  
wherby Christes true church is  
ordered, gouerned & instructed.

J. h.

For

Capl. iii.

For whosoever sercheth findeth  
The holy gost faileth not such as  
seke him ther but to seke him in  
anye other place: is no promise  
made. Als for they general coun  
sayles that they sticke so muche  
vnto: is but a weake foundacion  
For saynt Austine writtynge a  
gaynst the donatistes sayeth.  
Who is it that knoweth not the  
holy canonical scriptures, boeth  
of the olde and newe testamente  
to be conteined within certayne  
limettes and boundes: And that  
they be so put before al the wry  
tinges of bishopes þe shal come af  
ter ward, that it can not be doub  
ted at all neyther can we be, de  
ceyued of the whether it be true  
or whether it be ryght and good  
or not what soever is knownen to  
be writen in them. But al other  
wrytynge of byshopes or else,  
whiche either haue writte or shal  
wryte, after the confirmacion of  
the



the canonicall wytynges, maye  
be reprehended, both by the wor-  
des or wyse sentēce of some more  
knoweynge man in that matter  
as well as by the sage authorite  
of their bishopps, and by the pru-  
dence and learneinge of learned  
teachers, and by counsayles, if bi  
chaunce anye thyng be strayed  
from the trueth. And those coun-  
selles, sayeth he, that be done in  
euerie prouince or region, ought  
to geue place without any doub-  
tes, to the authoritie of the full  
counsayles, whiche are done of  
the whole companie of Christian  
men. And those generall coun-  
sayles that go before, maye often  
tymes be amended by those that  
folowe after, when soeuer anye  
thyng shall appere by anye ex-  
perience, whiche was before shet  
bp, when so euer anye thyng,  
is known that before was hyde  
wythout anye coloure of false

holp pryde, wythout anye puffed  
bp spice of Arrogancie, wythout  
anye condemnation of enuye or  
malice wyth pure humilitie,  
wyth vniuersall peace and qui-  
etnes, and wyth Christian cha-  
ritie. These be Augustines wor-  
de, whiche beinge charitably in-  
derstande are surelpe goode and  
profitable. For the fyrste he set-  
teth goddes worde, euen the ca-  
nonicall scriptures, to be the ve-  
ry perfect and vndoubted touch-  
stone. As it were an euerlasting  
trueth, agaynst the whiche no  
man maye reppne or stande.  
Then of mens wryttinges he de-  
clareth, what the nature is, and  
howe they ought to be vsed. Af-  
ter that, of generall counsailes  
to whiche thoughe he attribute  
much: yet layeth he ther no sure  
foundacion, but they maye con-  
clude vpon matters, that maye  
be afterwarde reformed. But as-  
lag



alas, when was ther any suche  
generall counsaile, as Sayntes  
Augustine here speaketh of:  
But what shoulde we doubt of  
suche perillous tymes spoken  
of in so manye places of the scrip-  
ture to be euen now, wherein  
that aduersarye is openede  
whiche hath so longe tyme sate  
in the steade of God, aboue all  
that is called God or goddes ser-  
uice. The abhominacion of deso-  
lacion, stode in the holye place.  
That gallat whose trimmed  
purpel hath ben drunke with the  
bloude of the Sayntes, but the  
Lord hath shortened those daies  
for hys electes sake, and hath  
destroyed this wycked wyth the  
bryghtnesse of his coming, with  
the spirite of hys mouth. For  
the Gospell is preached. Blessed  
are they, which are called to the  
lambes supper.

Alion, so manye fine and ca-  
ptiouse

ptiouse wyttes, among so many  
swifte and diuers iudgmentes  
of men as are nowe regninge in  
the worlde: harde shall it be for  
a right wel learned mā, to please  
the multitude of them that be  
learned. Wherefore I maye not  
nor wyl not, loke for it. But vn-  
to you, dearlie beloued brethren,  
which onely desyre the glorie of  
God and the lorde Iesus, and in  
the same lorde, the must charita-  
ble reformation and retourne  
of his elect frō blindnes & errour  
vnto the perfite knoweledge of y  
lordes heauenly doctrine: to you  
bretherne I saye, I make thys  
declaraion concerninge this my  
simple labour, in thys wyse. As  
touchynge my letter, I dyd it,  
God is my wytnes, euen of a fer-  
uente zeale, knowyng for a sure-  
tye. that thought Maister Chri-  
pyne be learned, and a greate  
sorte more which haue & do hold  
the



the same opinion that he doeth  
yet am I certen that none of  
them is able to defend it, either  
by scripture or doctours. As co-  
cerning þe authoritye of the doc-  
tours: I take them euen as thei  
þe selues desier. That is If they  
expounde anye place of scripture,  
declareynge to be so wyth the  
helpe of other manysse places  
of scripture, or wyth a sure and  
probable reason, whiche is not  
contrarye to anye places of the  
scripture: then I accepte it and  
praise God for hys gyftes in  
them.

If not: I let them passe as I  
fynde them. For I haue not al-  
ledged them here to the entente  
that anye man shoulde thynke  
that the scripture is the more  
established thorow theyr learne-  
nyge ( For all men are bayne  
and cursed is he that putteth  
hys trust in them ) But because  
these

these men sticke so muche to them  
that in this poynte are they? e-  
nemies. If they thinke I haue  
ben to quicke wyth them in any  
thing: let them knowe that the  
Lorde hath opened his wysdome  
euen vnto babes. And in those  
thynges, we maye not nor wyll  
geue place to such wyse and pru-  
dente, from whome they be hyd.  
If they can finde in their hertes  
to geue place to the infallible ve-  
ritie of Christes doctrine. If  
they can be contented to caste a-  
waye the hye estimaciō that they  
haue in they? muche readynges  
and longe continuance of tyme  
wyth the titles of honoure geue  
them by men. If they can tho-  
rowe pure charitie and desyre  
of brytie, caste them selues into  
suche an humilitie, as to thynke  
that God hath opened that vi-  
to simple men, whiche thorow  
they? hante mynde is kept from  
them



them: If they woulde I saye,  
haue they? whole respecte to the  
laste wyll and testamente of the  
lorde Iesus Christe in so muche  
that if it were an asse that speake  
vnto them any of those wordes  
they woulde yet here by? and re-  
garde the wordes for hys sake,  
who so they be if they were thus  
minded: I would wyshe to sped  
a greate parte of my lyfe wyth  
them, I woulde reuerence they?  
learneinge, and geue them as  
much honoure as appertayneth  
vnto suche men. But beinge o-  
ther wyse pult bp contrarpe to  
ryght charitpe and in a wronge  
estimacion of them selues, and  
despyceing Christes simplicitie:  
the Lorde cut ther combes. And  
therfor I hertely exhort al faith-  
full b?etherne, to lyfte vp they?  
hertes wyth me vnto the lyue-  
inge God, in pure fayeth, geue-  
ing hym most earnest, hertie, and  
hum?

humble thankes, for that he of  
his tender mercie, hath geuen  
vs so towardelie a yonge kynge  
so graciouse a gouernour, so ver  
tuouse a counsaile, by whose  
meanes all cruell tyrannye and  
murderinge of innocentes is ba  
nished, pure christian charitye  
put in bre and practise, the loz  
des doctrine brought in agayne  
into the seate a poynted, straunge  
learnynge banished and put a  
waye, the true worship and ser  
uice of God fofide out, the Idole  
seruice and false worshippynge  
driven out of the church of God.  
Thys waye shall the filthye and  
uncleane conuersacion of men  
be purified, and þ vncharitable  
and vn fayethfull dealynge of  
neyghbours shalbe reduced into  
vnitpe fayethfulness, and immu  
table loue whiche alwayes shal  
continue in the lyueynge God  
throughe Iesus Christe. Whose  
name



name be magnified, prayſed and  
exalted for ever. Amen.

Written the. vii. of Nouemb:  
by Anno Domini. M.

D. clvi.

D. R

Imprinted

at London by John Day

and Wyllyam Seres, dwels  
lynge in S: pulchres Parish  
at the ſigne of the Reſur:  
rection a litle aboue Hol:  
bourne Conduite.

Cum gratia & priuilegio  
ad imprimendum ſolum.